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Inductive Studies in the Acts.

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OUTLINE OF THE PRIMITIVE ERA OF CHRISTIANITY.

As Recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

30-63 A.D.

FIRST DIVISION.—PERIOD OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY.

Text : Acts 1:1—7:60. Time : Four Years, 30-33 A.D. Locality : Jerusalem.
Leaders : Peter and Stephen.

- SEC. 1. The Parting Instructions and the Exaltation of Jesus.
Acts 1:1-26. May, 30 A.D. Mt. Olivet, Jerusalem.
- SEC. 2. Manifestation of Christ's Spiritual Presence and Leadership.
Acts 2:1-47. May, 30 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 3. Renewed Hostility of the Jews toward the Christians.
Acts 3:1-4:31. About 31-32 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 4. Property Relations and Beneficence of the Jerusalem Christians.
Acts 4:32-5:11. About 31-33 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 5. Apostolic Miracle-Working and Further Jewish Persecution.
Acts 5:12-42. About 32-33 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 6. First Step in the Development of Christian Organization.
Acts 6:1-7. About 32-33 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 7. The Preaching of Stephen and its Consequences.
Acts 6:8-7:60. 33 A.D. Jerusalem.

SECOND DIVISION.—PERIOD OF GOSPEL EXPANSION.

Text : Acts 8:1—15:35. Time : Seventeen Years, 34-50 A.D. Localities : Palestine, Syria, Galatia. Leaders : Peter, James, and Paul.

- SEC. 8. First Extension of Organized Christianity beyond Jerusalem.
Acts 8:1-40. 34 A.D. Samaria and elsewhere.

- SEC. 9. The Conversion of Paul from Judaism to Christianity.
Acts 9: 1-19a; *cf.* 22: 6-16 and 26: 13-18. 34 A.D. Damascus.
- SEC. 10. Paul's Early Christian Activity.
Acts 9: 19b-31; *cf.* Gal. 1: 17, 18. 34-37 A.D. Damascus, Arabia, Jerusalem, Cilicia.
- SEC. 11. Peter's Tour of Visitation among the Christians of Palestine.
Acts 9: 32-43. About 38-39 A.D. Circuit through Palestine.
- SEC. 12. Peter Retought the Freedom of Christianity from Judaism.
Acts 10: 1-48. About 40 A.D. Joppa, Cæsarea.
- SEC. 13. Concurrence of the Jerusalem Christians in Peter's Action.
Acts 11: 1-18. About 40 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 14. First Mention of the Gentile-Christian Community at Antioch (founded soon after 33 A.D.).
Acts 11: 19-30. About 40-42 A.D. Antioch.
- SEC. 15. Persecution of the Jerusalem Christians by Herod.
Acts 12: 1-25. 44 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 16. Paul's First Evangelizing Tour.
Acts 13: 1-14: 28. About 46-48 A.D. Antioch, Cyprus, Galatia.
- SEC. 17. Joint Conference at Jerusalem concerning the Relation of Christianity to Judaism.
Acts 15: 1-35. 50 A.D. Jerusalem.

THIRD DIVISION.—PERIOD OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY.

Text: Acts 15: 36-28: 31. Time: Thirteen Years, 51-63 A.D. Localities: Asia Minor, Greece, Palestine, Italy. Leader: Paul.

- SEC. 18. Paul's Second Evangelizing Tour.
Acts 15: 36-18: 22. 51-54 A.D. Asia Minor, Greece, Antioch.
- SEC. 19. Paul's Third Evangelizing Tour.
Acts 18: 23-21: 16. 55-58 A.D. Asia Minor, Illyricum, Greece.
- SEC. 20. Paul's Arrest at Jerusalem through Jewish Enmity.
Acts 21: 17-22: 29. 58 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 21. Trial of Paul before the Sanhedrin.
Acts 22: 30-23: 35. 58 A.D. Jerusalem.
- SEC. 22. Trials of Paul before Felix and Festus.
Acts 24: 1-25: 12. 58-60 A.D. Cæsarea.
- SEC. 23. Paul's Hearing before Agrippa.
Acts 25: 13-26: 32. 60 A.D. Cæsarea.
- SEC. 24. Transfer to and Imprisonment at Rome.
Acts 27: 1-28: 31. 60-63 A.D. Cæsarea, Malta, Rome.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 30-100 A. D.

All the known world	Rome	Greece and Asia	Syria and Galatia	Throughout Palestine	Jerusalem	30	DAY OF PENTECOST. Beginning of the Extension of Christianity. Rapid Growth. Miracle Working. Persecution. Community of Goods. APPOINTMENT OF FIRST FORMAL OFFICERS AMONG THE CHRISTIANS. PREACHING, TRIAL AND MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN. CONVERSION OF PAUL.
						35	Paul's Arabian Sojourn and Work in Damascus. Mission Work in many places. Paul's First Christian Visit to Jerusalem.
						40	PETER'S MISSIONARY TOUR AMONG THE PALESTINIAN CHURCHES. PETER AND CORNELIUS. UNIVERSALITY OF THE GOSPEL RECOGNIZED. The Church Increasing and Spreading Rapidly. FIRST MENTION OF THE ANTIOCH CHURCH (founded soon after 33 A.D.). First Period of Paul's Work in Antioch. Rise of the Term "Christians."
						45	MARTYRDOM OF JAMES. DEATH OF HEROD. BARNABAS AND PAUL VISIT JERUSALEM. FIRST MENTION OF OFFICE OF ELDER
						50	PAUL'S FIRST EVANGELIZING TOUR. Churches Founded in Cyprus and Galatia. Second Period of Paul's Work in Antioch. Epistle of James.
						55	THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM. PAUL'S SECOND EVANGELIZING TOUR. Revisits the Churches of Galatia. Eighteen Months in Corinth. 1 and 2 Thessalonians written there. Third Period of Paul's Work in Antioch. Galatians written there.
						60	PAUL'S THIRD EVANGELIZING TOUR. Revisitation in Galatia. Nearly Three Years in Ephesus. 1 Corinthians written there. Revisitation in Macedonia. 2 Corinthians written there. Romans written at Corinth. FIFTH VISIT OF PAUL TO JERUSALEM. ARREST AT PENTECOST. TRIPLE TRIAL OF PAUL, AND THE CAESAREAN IMPRISONMENT.
						65	THE VOYAGE TO ROME. SHIPWRECK. WINTER AT MALTA. PAUL'S FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT. Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians written. PERIOD OF PAUL'S RELEASE. Visit to Greece and Asia (possibly also to Spain). 1 Timothy and Titus written.
						70	SUPPOSED SECOND IMPRISONMENT OF PAUL. 2 Timothy. Paul's death (?). Beginning of the Jewish-Roman war. Christians remain neutral. Epistles of Peter and Jude written perhaps about this time. Gospel of Mark probably written about this time, perhaps in Italy. Gospel of Matthew, Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation.
						75	FALL OF JERUSALEM. DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE.
						80	Gospel of Luke and the Acts probably written somewhere within these ten years, 70-80 A.D. Johannine Epistles (1, 2, and 3 John) written about this time from Ephesus. (Scarce any details of the history 70-100 A.D. are known).
						90	GOSPEL OF JOHN WRITTEN ABOUT THIS TIME FROM EPHEBUS.
						100	DEATH OF THE APOSTLE JOHN. CLOSE OF THE PRIMITIVE ERA OF CHRISTIANITY.

There is much uncertainty as to the precise dates of the events of the Apostolic Age. The chronology indicated above is that upon which at present there is most agreement among scholars. Much variety of opinion however prevails, and current dates may be still further modified. The consecution of events as recorded in Acts is much more to be trusted, but neither here is there certainty. The relative importance of events is indicated roughly by the relative sizes of type.

THE PRIMITIVE ERA OF CHRISTIANITY.

AS RECORDED IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

30-63 A. D.

FIRST DIVISION.—PERIOD OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY.

Text: Acts I: 1-7: 60. Time: Four Years, 30-33 A.D. Locality: Jerusalem.

Leaders: Peter and Stephen.

During this period the organized Christian community is confined to Jerusalem. It assumes its primitive system of government, rites, methods, and teaching. It becomes firmly established as the Jewish Mother-Church of Christianity. It grows firmly united, and gathers zeal and force for its subsequent missionary activity. It is purified and strengthened by persecution. Its members are Jews, either by birth or by adoption as proselytes. The great problem about which the development of the church during the primitive era turns—namely, whether the Gentiles should be admitted directly to the Christian church without first conforming to Jewish rites—comes into prominence through Stephen only at the close of this period, and serves as the ground of transition to the second period of the history.

SEC. I. THE PARTING INSTRUCTIONS AND THE EXALTATION OF JESUS.

Acts I: 1-26. May, 30 A.D. Mt. Olivet, Jerusalem.

I. STUDY OF THE FACTS.

Let the following subclassification and abstract of the material in this section be verified, corrected, or improved:

Par. 1. I: 1-8, Jesus' Parting Instructions to his Disciples.

Par. 2. I: 9-11, The Ascension of Jesus.

Par. 3. I: 12-14, Fellowship of the Waiting Disciples.

Par. 4. I: 15-26, Election of Matthias to the Twelve.

Abstract.—The author's earlier book narrated the life of Jesus, the present book continues the Christian history from that point. Jesus promised a Spirit baptism to his disciples which should indue them for their work of spreading the gospel through the world. For this they were to wait in Jerusalem. Then from Mt. Olivet came Jesus' exalta-

tion to heaven, and the divine assurance of his return. The company of disciples left by Jesus consisted of the eleven faithful apostles, certain devoted Galilean women with Jesus' mother, the now believing brethren of Jesus, and others, to the number of 120. At one of their meetings Peter, as spokesman of the company, suggested that the vacancy in the twelve made by the withdrawal of Judas be filled. The new apostle must be one who had witnessed Jesus' entire ministry and resurrection. Of two of their number thus qualified one, Matthias, was chosen by lot—a means of determining the divine choice.

II. TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION.

1. *The last instructions of Jesus.*—With whom was Jesus assembled (vs. 4), where, when, and for what purpose? What was the promise of the Father (vs. 4) for which Jesus directed them to wait (*cf.* Luke 24:49; John 7:39; 16:7-14)? Why was a waiting period necessary, how long was it to be, and why in Jerusalem? Does vs. 4 indicate that Jesus' disciples had been baptized by John? Could it be understood from vs. 5 that water baptism was of the old dispensation (*cf.* Matt. 11:11), but that in the new dispensation it was replaced by the baptism of the Spirit (*cf.* Acts 19:1-6)? Compare the water baptism of John with the Spirit baptism promised here. Who were come together (vs. 6), where, when, and why? What power were they to receive (vs. 8), and how was it different from the power they already had? What commission (vs. 8) did Jesus give the disciples? Compare with this Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:47-49. What was the scope of this mission? Did the disciples so understand it from the first and attempt to carry it out? Of what were they to be witnesses (vs. 8)? See the passages where such witness-bearing is recorded, Luke 24:53; Acts 2:32; 10:37-43; 13:23-31, and others. What qualifications in this matter were requisite for apostles (vss. 21, 22)?

2. *The apostles' idea of the kingdom.*—What suggested this question (vs. 6) which the disciples addressed to Jesus? What did they mean by the restoration of the kingdom to Israel? To what extent did the disciples still expect Jesus to become a political, temporal, and visible Messiah? How could they hold these views after receiving Jesus' teaching of the spiritual Messiahship? Consider Jesus' reply to their question. To what event or events did Jesus refer, the "times and seasons" of which had not been disclosed (*cf.* Mark 13:32)? Explain the patience of Jesus in dealing with the lingering misconceptions of himself and his work.

3. *The exaltation of Jesus.*—Compare the other accounts of the ascension in Mark 16: 19, 20; Luke 24: 50, 51. Compare with it also the translation of Elijah, 2 Kings 2: 9-12. What is meant (vs. 9) by “taken up”? What was the cloud which received him (*cf.* Mark 9: 7; 1 Kings 8: 10, 11; Isaiah 6: 1-4)? What was the purpose of God in this visible exaltation of his Son? Who were the two white-robed men (*cf.* Luke 24: 1-7), and why were they present? What prompted their question to the disciples? Just what information did they give? What is to be understood by the statement that “in like manner” Jesus will return (*cf.* the same phrase in Matt. 23: 37; Luke 13: 34; Acts 7: 28; and see Matt. 24: 30; Mark 13: 26)? Compare the angelic appearance of vss. 10, 11 with other angelic appearances recounted by Luke (*e. g.*, Luke 1: 11-22, 26-38; 2: 8-15; 22: 43; 24: 4-8; Acts 7: 30-38; 10: 3-7; 12: 7-15), as also with similar accounts in other gospels (Matt. 1: 20-24; 2: 13-21; 28: 2-7; John 12: 29; 20: 12, 13); what view should be taken as to the reality and as to the details of these manifestations?

4. *The first group of disciples.*—Observe four different elements which constituted this primitive company of Christians: *a*) The eleven apostles; compare this list (vs. 13) with those found in Matt. 10: 2-4; Mark 3: 16-19; Luke 6: 14-16. *b*) Jesus’ mother and other women who had been adherents of Jesus in his public ministry (*cf.* Mark 15: 40; Luke 8: 1-3; 23: 49; 24: 22; Acts 8: 3). *c*) Jesus’ own brothers; how many, what change had taken place in them, and why (*cf.* Matt. 13: 55; John 7: 3-5; 1 Cor. 15: 7)? *d*) Other unnamed disciples, making in all 120 (vs. 15). Where were the homes of these followers of Christ? Were there still other disciples elsewhere (*cf.* 1 Cor. 15: 6)? Why was the number of the Christians so small? How was this company engaged during the waiting period?

5. *The election of Matthias to the twelve.*—Why did Peter suggest that the place left vacant by Judas should be filled? Are vss. 18, 19 to be regarded as the words of Peter, or as a parenthetical addition of the writer or his source? How is this account of Judas’ death to be explained in view of the account contained in Matt. 26: 47-50? Was it God’s will that Judas’ place in the twelve should be filled; if so, what of the view that Paul was divinely intended to take the place rather than Matthias? Whence did Luke, who was not one of this company, derive the information contained in this chapter? Ascertain the meaning in their original historical setting of the Old Testament passages cited by Peter in support of his suggestion, Ps. 69: 25;

109:8. Consider the use made of them in this connection by Peter. Since both Matthias and Barsabas were qualified for the apostolate, why did not the disciples themselves select the one or the other? What use was accustomed to be made of the lot, and how was it operated? Was the lot a proper mode of ascertaining the divine will? Was the divine choice limited to one of the two named? By the term "Lord" (vs. 24) is God to be understood, or Christ? Do we know anything further about Matthias or Barsabas? In this first recorded business meeting of the disciples, were the apostles shown to be officers, or merely leaders, Peter acting as spokesman of the group? Did the whole company take equal part in the business which was transacted? Was the method of procedure entirely democratic? Is there any evidence of formal officers or of any formal organization of the Christians at this time?

III. OBSERVATIONS AND TEACHINGS.

Under this head the more important facts and teachings of this chapter are to be gathered and arranged opically, so that the great lines of the history shall clearly appear, as well as its practical bearing upon our own lives. The observations and teachings which follow are only by way of suggestion. They should be traced to their sources in Acts 1 and verified or corrected. Then others should be added to them which the student will find. The permanent value of the study will be much increased by faithful work at this point.

1. *Organization*.—The Jerusalem group of Christians numbered 120, and there were perhaps some others elsewhere; but Jesus' work had not had numerical success.—It was regarded as important that the place in the twelve left vacant by Judas' withdrawal should be filled from the body of disciples, and Matthias was appointed to the apostolate.—There was as yet no formal organization of the Christians; the apostles acted as leaders, and Peter was the spokesman of the company.—The disciples, in the transaction of their business, seem to have acted upon thoroughly democratic principles.

2. *Environment*.—The ten days of this period were spent quietly by the Christians, without aggressive work, waiting for the fulfilment of Christ's promise.—The Jewish enemies were inactive after the culmination of their persecution in the death of Jesus.—Jesus plainly pointed out the whole world as the sphere of the gospel; to his conception it was a universal religion.—The brothers of Jesus, who disbelieved in his claims during his life, became his followers after his resurrection.—The believing women were a testimony to the fact that the gospel had placed woman on a higher, freer, and better plane.

3. *Institutions*.—The rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper are not yet mentioned, but were probably recognized, for on the day of

Pentecost they appear in the records.—The Christians had meetings for worship and prayer.—They probably continued also the observance of Jewish religious customs.

4. *Belief and teaching*.—Christ's resurrection appearances and teaching were all-important in the preparation of the disciples for their work.—Jesus dealt gently with the Messianic misconception which still remained in the apostles' minds.—The departure of the visible Christ was accompanied by the assurance of his return.—Jesus gave no answer concerning the time of his return, since he himself did not know when it would be and did not consider it of importance to know.—New experiences led to a new understanding and use of the Old Testament Scriptures which contained types and foreshadowings of the Messianic period.

5. *Daily life*.—The injunctions of Christ were faithfully kept by his disciples.—The early Christians were closely united both in their social and in their religious life.—They awaited the fulfilment of the promise with trust, thanksgiving, joy, and expectancy.

6. *Divine guidance*.—Jesus' parting command and promise show his continued relation, beyond the ascension, to his followers on earth.—The Holy Spirit was to be always with them in full measure to guide and strengthen them in their work.—Devotion, ability, and energy in a few persons counted for more than numbers in spreading and establishing the gospel.

Literature.—This section of Acts receives elucidation in all the commentaries on Acts, under Chap. I; see the commentaries of GLOAG (Scribners, N. Y., 2 vols., \$7.00), HACKETT (Amer. Bapt. Pub. Society, Philadelphia, \$2.00), MEYER (Funk & Wagnalls Co., N. Y., \$2.00), CAMBRIDGE BIBLE (Macmillan Co., N. Y., \$1.25), and others. These are all first-class works. Gloag's Commentary is the best, but expensive. Next to it stands Hackett's. Meyer's Commentary, of high value, would hardly be satisfactory if only one commentary could be afforded. The Cambridge Bible will be found sufficient for most students. The general works upon the Apostolic Age make little or no reference to this portion of the history.

SEC. 2. MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST'S SPIRITUAL PRESENCE AND LEADERSHIP.

Acts 2: 1-47 May, 30 A. D. Jerusalem.

I. STUDY OF THE FACTS.

Let the following subclassification and abstract of the material in this section be verified, corrected, or improved:

Par. 1. 2 : 1-4, Fulfilment of the Promise of the Spirit.

Par. 2. 2 : 5-13, The Inspired Tongue-speaking.

Par. 3. 2 : 14-36, Peter's Pentecostal Address.

Par. 4. 2 : 37-42, Numerical Increase of the Christians.

Par. 5. 2 : 43-47, The Disciples' Manner of Life.

Abstract.—On the day of Pentecost following the ascension, while the disciples were assembled in a private house for prayer, the promised outpouring of the Spirit came, attested to the senses by accompanying noise and symbolic light, as also by tongue-speaking among the Christians. The strange sound attracted to the place where the disciples were assembled a large number of Jews and Jewish proselytes, some of them residents in Jerusalem, others from foreign lands sojourning in the city in attendance upon the feast. All wished to know the meaning of this remarkable occurrence. The apostles, through their spokesman Peter, gave the explanation. They were witnessing the fulfilment of Joel's prediction that at the coming of the Messiah's kingdom God would pour out his Spirit so abundantly that all would prophesy. The Messiah had come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, whose wonderful works attested his divine mission. He had been rejected and crucified, but that had been foreseen and foreordained by God, who had now exalted him. The psalmist had predicted how the Messiah should be released from the grave and should sit at God's right hand. This had taken place, Jesus had been made Lord of all, and his kingdom was now being conspicuously established upon the earth. The effect of the divine manifestation and the apostle's words was immediate and great. About three thousand persons accepted Jesus as Messiah and Master, and became associated with the original body of disciples, receiving from the apostles instruction concerning the life and teachings of Christ. The Christian community held fast together, giving to the needy, continuing their Jewish worship, observing the memorial supper of their Lord, living in joy and peace, and continually winning additions to their number.

II. TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION.

1. *The Pentecostal coming of the Spirit.*—When and what was the Jewish feast of Pentecost? Cf. Ex. 23 : 14-17 ; Deut. 16 : 1-17. Did Pentecost in the year 30 A. D. fall upon the first day of the week (Sunday)? Why was the day of Pentecost chosen by God for the outpouring of the Spirit? How long was this after the resurrection, and after the ascension, of Jesus? Recall Jesus' promise of the Spirit, cf.

Acts 1:4, 5; John 15:26; 16:7-14. Had not the Holy Spirit been present and active among men before this time? What was the peculiarity of this Pentecostal visitation? Was this bestowal in part of temporary gifts, *e. g.*, tongue-speaking and miracle-working? Where were the Christians assembled on this day, and for what purpose? On the symbolic wind and fire compare Ps. 104:3, 4; Ezek. 1:4; Ex. 13:21; 19:16-20. What was the purpose of these external signs?

2. *The Jews of the Dispersion.*—In what numbers and where outside of Palestine were Jews found in the first century A. D.? Recall the three great compulsory dispersions of the Jews in the previous centuries, *cf.* 2 Kings 15:29; 17:6; 25:8-11. Had there also been voluntary removals of Jews to foreign lands for the pursuit of business? Why and how did the dispersed Jews maintain their Jewish religion in the foreign countries where they dwelt? In vs. 5 does “dwelling at Jerusalem” mean resident there or sojourning there at the feast, or does it include both? Was the feast of Pentecost largely attended by the Jews of the Dispersion; if so, why? Locate upon the map the various places referred to in vss. 9-11. Why do these visitors figure so largely in the account of this Christian occasion? How did the Jewish Dispersion assist in the spread of the gospel through Gentile lands?

3. *The gift of tongues.*—What is to be inferred from vss. 4, 6, 11, as to the nature of the tongue-speaking referred to? Consider two explanations: an actual speaking in different foreign languages and dialects, or an ecstatic, incoherent utterance of the believing Christian manifesting his joy in the possession of the Spirit. Would the former gift be necessary in view of the fact that Greek was the common language of all the Roman Empire? If the apostles were speaking intelligibly in foreign languages why were they by some regarded as drunk (vs. 13)? Observe that there was among the primitive Christians a spiritual gift called tongue-speaking which was uniformly of the second character described above, *cf.* Acts 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor. 12-14 (*esp.* 14:14, 19, 22, 23). May it be, then, that the source from which Luke drew his account of the day of Pentecost misunderstood the phenomenon, and that it was in fact only the common tongue-speaking? See especially Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, pp. 231-242.

4. *Peter's Pentecostal discourse.*—Why did Peter give the address on this occasion? Why did the eleven apostles stand up with him? What two classes of people did he designate among his hearers? Was

it the main point of Peter's discourse to prove to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah in spite of his humiliation and death? Consider carefully the steps of his argument to this end. Under what circumstances was this quoted prophecy of Joel (2:28-32) originally given? Explain the use made of it by Peter in this connection. What is meant (vs. 17) by the "last days"? What is meant (vs. 20) by the "day of the Lord"? Consider the original historical meaning of Ps. 16:8-11 quoted in this address. What argument did Peter deduce from it, and was his interpretation of the passage valid? What was Peter's argument from Ps. 110:1 for the exaltation of Christ, *cf.* Matt. 22:43-45? Consider in detail the points of teaching about Christ contained in the discourse. Show how the discourse was adapted to the situation. What was its effect? From what classes came the new converts? What was required of them? Account for the large number of converts. Why had not Jesus had such numerical success? How did Luke probably obtain this account of the day of Pentecost for his history? Are we to suppose that all of Peter's discourse is here recorded, or that we have only the main points he made, the substance of what he said?

5. *Characteristics of the primitive Christian life.*—What were the conditions of entrance (belief, conduct, and form) to the company of disciples? What had made baptism a Christian rite, *cf.* Luke 24:47; Matt. 28:19? What did baptism signify to these converts, and how was it administered? Was there also a Spirit baptism, *cf.* Acts 1:5; 2:28; 19:1-6? Was the Lord's Supper also observed as a Christian rite ("breaking of bread," *cf.* Acts 20:7, 11; 1 Cor. 10:16), and why, *cf.* Matt. 26:26-29; Luke 22:14-20? What was the apostles' teaching to which the new disciples gave continued attention (vs. 42)—was it instruction in the life and teaching of Jesus? What wonders and signs were done by the apostles (vs. 43), and why? Consider the self-sacrifice and charity of the primitive Christians as described in vss. 44, 45. Why did the Christians, who at this time were practically all Jews, remain faithful to the temple service and Jewish worship generally? Had Christ taught that Christianity was independent of Judaism? If so, why did they not so believe and act? Did they have also distinctly Christian meetings for prayer, worship, and fellowship? Account for the unity, joy, and praise of this Christian company. Explain the meaning of vs. 47, last clause. Compare this type of Christian living with ours of the present day, showing points of excellence and of deficiency in each.

III. OBSERVATIONS AND TEACHINGS.

1. *Organization*.—There is still no formal organization of the Christians, although the number is greatly increased; but a close fellowship and united activity and life.—The Christians were gathered together for united worship when the great outpouring of the Spirit came.—The apostles stood up to represent the body of the disciples, while Peter spoke as the representative of the apostles.—Peter here sustains the same relation to the other apostles as during Christ's ministry—he is leader and spokesman.

2. *Environment*.—The time had come when Christianity could achieve numerical success.—The large number of new disciples were mostly visitors to the feast from Galilee and foreign lands.—They were almost wholly Jews, with perhaps some Gentiles who had become Jews by adopting that religion.—It may be presumed that the chief persecutors of Jesus were not among the converts.

3. *Institutions*.—Baptism was used as a symbolic rite of entrance upon the Christian life; it seems to have been instituted by Jesus, although he did not himself use it in his work.—The breaking of bread (Lord's Supper) was observed as a memorial of Christ, in accordance with his instruction; it took place either at the beginning or at the end of a common Christian meal daily.—The Christians adhered to their Jewish worship; at the same time they had distinctly Christian meetings for prayer, worship, and fellowship.

4. *Belief and teaching*.—Peter's discourse is full of truth newly conceived and presented, and is manifestly inspired utterance.—The main teaching of the discourse is that Jesus is Messiah and Lord, a truth witnessed to by his work on earth, and especially by the Old Testament Messianic prophecies which found their fulfilment in him.—The emphasis is here laid on the prophecies because he was addressing Jews who believed in these.—Peter explained the humiliation, rejection, and death of Christ as foreseen by God rather than a thwarting of his purposes, and showed how his resurrection and exaltation removed that objection to believing in him.—Repentance, and baptism as a symbol of it, were necessary to an acceptance of Christ and a fellowship with his disciples.—Instruction in the facts and the truths of the gospel formed an essential part in the daily life of the Christians.

5. *Daily life*.—Besides the instruction just referred to, the daily life of the Christians was marked by close association, unity of heart

and action, joy, worship, and prayer, commemoration of Christ, and energetic preaching of the gospel.—The Christian life, work, and teaching impressed and won the unconverted about them, so that their numbers continually increased.—It is not known whether the Christians stopped their common avocations in order to give their whole time to the new life and activity; probably some of them did so; at any rate they had frequent meetings at private houses and were faithful and earnest in their evangelical work.

6. *Divine guidance.*—Christ's relations to his people are vital and permanent.—The Holy Spirit is present in believers, and in the world, to carry forward the kingdom which Christ established.—The inner experience of the Spirit was signified and emphasized on the day of Pentecost by external symbolic manifestations.—The opportunity given the Christians to reach the multitude with the gospel was fully used.

Literature.—Full treatment of this important section of Acts will be found in all commentaries on the book; see especially Gloag, Hackett, Meyer, and the Cambridge Bible. Many other works also treat of this event, only the more important of which (and such as are in English) will be mentioned: SCHAFF, *History of the Christian Church* (Scribners, N. Y.), Vol. I, pp. 225–245; NEANDER, *Planting and Training of the Christian Church* (Macmillan Co., N. Y.), Vol. I, pp. 3–23, Vol. II, pp. 58–64; FARRAR, *Life of St. Paul* (Dutton & Co., N. Y.), chaps. v and vii; STIFLER, *Introduction to the Book of Acts* (Revell Co., Chicago), secs. ii and iii; brief comment in RAMSAY, *St. Paul the Traveler* (Putnam's Sons, N. Y.), pp. 363–365. One of the greatest works upon the apostolic age, but one which is extreme in its criticism and requires to be read with independence and caution, will be of constant service in this study, namely, WEIZSÄCKER, *Apostolic Age of the Christian Church* (Putnam's Sons, N. Y., 2 vols.); on this section see Vol. I, chaps. ii and iii.